

Senator Speaks Here Plain Dealer
8 Jan 66

Young: Viet War Is a Face Saver

STATINTL

The big reason the United States is involved in Viet Nam is that it's afraid to admit having made a mistake, in the opinion of U.S. Sen. Stephen M. Young.

"More than anything else, we are fighting to avoid admitting failure," said Young in a speech yesterday noon at the City Club Forum. "The primary reason for our being there today is our proud refusal to admit a mistake in our attempt to make Viet Nam a pro-American and an anti-Chinese state. As Walter Lippmann bluntly put it: 'We are fighting to save face.'"

Sen. Young added:

"We Americans should not be so much interested in saving face as in saving lives—the lives of Americans and Asiatics."

"IF PRESIDENT JOHNSON moves decisively for peace, our people will support him. If instead, he approves steadily expanding military involvement, he will please our militarists and war hawks in Congress.

"Then in the 1966 congressional elections and in 1968, as casualty lists mount, some Republican politicians, now urging acceleration of the war by bombing Hanoi and Haiphong and even Red China, will be first to denounce as 'Lyndon's war.'

The 76-year-old Democrat praised President Johnson's efforts to negotiate peace.

"CAN ANYONE claim that we would lose face and that our prestige in Asia would be damaged were we to withdraw from this conflict?" he asked. "A great nation like ours cannot lose face by withdrawing from a miserable war. We have lost face by fooling around with it."

Sen. Young attacked the CIA, calling it "an invisible government."

In the question period, he said the CIA had become a policy-making body, "instead of the intelligence gathering agency it is supposed to be." He talked about his having proposed a "watchdog" committee in Congress to keep tabs on the CIA.

"LAST YEAR," he said, "the CIA spent \$4 billion, more than the Department of State spent. In 1965, they are going to spend \$5 billion to \$6 billion."

The senator said that, in his opinion, South Viet Nam was of "no strategic importance whatever to the defense of the United States." He said that unless there was a negotiated settlement there, "American GIs are likely to be fighting and dying in Viet Nam in 1980."